

**SEÑORA de Fresnillo quiere a ver usted.**

I was alone in the Zacatecas of our mazo made this announcement. I went to the door. A woman and two children stood before me. Distress was evident. The woman was weeping and telling the whole of her past history into my ears. She did not deserve such a fate—her son was a good boy—her children were healthy—they had walked forty miles from Fresnillo—her son did not want to be a soldier—her son had been arrested—she did not want her son to be a soldier. I gathered the information that I could help her. She was miserably pathetic. I administered to her refreshment and advice. I persuaded the good woman to explain at her leisure. With her little girl on one side and her little boy on the other she told her story. Over the woman's head and shoulders was the inevitable *rebozo*, a faded black and white. She wore a filthy, dishevelled, flannel skirt and wide boots. As to costume, her little girl was an exact replica of herself. Large black eyes looked through layers of dirt and dust. The boy was a little old man—gaudy, wearing long khaki breeches, sandals, but mostly shabby. The family looked as if they had struggled over forty miles of desert land through terrifying dust. But the Mexican—over the child—is a fatalist.

This was the story in brief. The woman's eighteen-year-old son, our former electrician at the mine, was arrested and forced into the army of the Federals. Upon the remittance of one hundred pesos the boy could be released. The mother did not have one hundred pesos; hence her forty-mile walk to our place.

I jumped on my horse and galloped to the station, where the army was mobilizing for transportation. The station was a scene of applicable confusion. Dissonant, endless rails greeted me. Shuffling and shambling up and down the platform or in agonized prostration, hundreds of deplorable women wailed their grief. At their heels sobbed their children in piteous mystification. A long line of cattle cars was jammed with new recruits recently arrested. Slovenly soldiers, mostly youths, guarded the cars. Some were loitering on the roofs of the cars, smoking cigarettes. Some were drunk from *pulque*. The recruits were packed ready for shipment south to fight the Zapatistas.

The Governor of the state was the general of the army. When I finally found him he was very courteous. His house was my house as a special favor to me and to my company he would reduce the remittance from one hundred pesos to half that sum. I supposed the fifty pesos and our engineer was released.

#### RECRUITING IN MEXICO IS SIMPLICITY ITSELF.

Thousands of soldiers are forced into the army in this manner. Involuntary enlistment consists in arrest for petty charges followed by the sentence of enforced service. Though many must thus fight for a cause in which they have no interest, most of them happily forget their previous sentiments and become contented with a life that provides *pulque*, cigarettes and the intimate association with an extensive variety of *soldaderas*.

Enforced service is, therefore, by no means always necessary. Individual solicitation wins soldiers into the ranks. The primitive Mexican spirit is susceptible to the appeal. To them the country with no care for the future, the inducement offered far more often than a reputation of principles to be attained. The only peon is too ignorant, too irresponsible, too unambitious, too down-trodden to look beyond *manana*.

Of the population of Mexico, 80 per cent. is peon. The peon is 80 per cent. Indian and 20 per cent. Spanish. For two hundred years he has been virtually a slave. Oppression has warped his manhood; his ideals have been crushed; his sense of responsibility has been driven out of him. He has been weakened and debased. Submissiveness has become his habit. To eat, drink, smoke, to see a bullfight on Sunday, for which he will pawn his *sabote*, and the woman, her flannel skirt, and to propagate his miserable kind is his aim in life. Fatalism rules his spirit: "Si Dios quiere—*if God wills it*—his religion. The peon knows not the meaning of democracy. There are no schools to teach him. Little can be expected from a people who for years have had two dictators annually—dictators who make promises never fulfilled. There can be nothing steadfast in a people with no political feeling; nothing trustworthy in a people who have been deceived. Their inheritance is poverty, suffering and deceit. Deception meets with deception.

#### THE PEON IS IMPARTIAL WHEN IT COMES TO FIGHTING.

One is not surprised to learn that the peon will fight on Monday for the leader of one faction and on Tuesday for the leader of the opposing faction. The conquered turns over to the conquerors. *Combararse*—change—is the term for this form of military tactics. The increase in numbers of soldiers depends upon the numbers of victories of an army. Due to *combararse* an army is built up, as far back as 1519, when he conquered Mexico to rule her for thirty years, trained the aid of the armies he conquered throughout his campaign. Maximilian, in 1864, drove out Juarez, the then President of Mexico, with the help of the factions that turned over to his cause after battles. So to-day, during the recent hideous years of chaotic revolution, a large portion of each army conquered has turned over to fight for their former enemy.

At the end of three hours' fighting at Fresnillo all but ten soldiers of the defensive army turned over to the victorious side. These ten, hidden in a tower, held their position only because their captain threatened to shoot them. When their leader committed suicide by firing a bullet through his head these ten changed over.

Even the officers' loyalty cannot be counted upon. Madiana Barron, a chary general, mindful of the possibilities of treachery on the part of his subordinates, was determined to keep a dependable lieutenant at Fresnillo. He chose his own son. The son, seeing opportunity for greater freedom and a larger following, turned against his father. His boast, shouted to the four winds, was that he would "get" his father.

# THE LIFE OF A MEXICAN ROOKIE



In the First Place He Is a Fatalist, Because It Doesn't Pay To Be Anything Else—The Peon Will Fight on Monday for One Faction and on Tuesday for Another—It Is All the Same, Provided He May See a Bullfight on Sunday.

By Raymond Perry

Artillery is not often used in a Mexican army. Somewhere in Mexico to-day there are a number of creditable French guns. Villa's effective work was due largely to these cannon. They were, however, operated by American soldiers of fortune. Few Mexicans are intelligent enough to handle so modern a contrivance. The shells of these guns, if reloaded in Mexico, will undoubtedly do most of their damage to the operators. I once asked an officer if the soldiers ever had any target practice. I learned from him that the Mexican is a natural soldier. The enemy is his target.

#### ANYTHING OF METAL IS A SHELL IN MEXICO.

At Zacatecas I had opportunity to see a demonstration of this natural marksmanship. The town was about to be captured for the second time during my stay. From the roof of the Hotel Frances I watched the progress of the attacking army. The hotel stood between two hills. As the shells passed over our heads our attention was not lacking. Four brass cannon, mounted on one hill, sent a desultory fire across to the enemy on the opposite ridge—ostensibly to prevent their approach. Attached to each shell was an apology. This action took place during the day. There was no fighting after dark, as the belligerent armies wanted to sleep. At the end of two days' fighting the brass cannon killed two victims—a lame horse and a burro. These brass cannon of Mexico are loaded with a strange admixture of anything metal. After Zacatecas had been contentably captured for the second time, I found things metal on the roof—small, misshapen lead balls. The roof was not damaged.

Villa has the distinction of having organized the only efficient hospital corps ever established in a Mexican army. His success was due largely to American surgeons. He had with him, too, a number of Mexican doctors who were graduated from American and European schools of medicine. A hospital train, composed of converted box cars, accompanied the army. Operating tables, sanitary instruments and sterilizers were installed. Aside from Villa's grasp and genius, no leader in Mexico has shown any marked ability in this respect. The hospital of the average army is a drug store in the nearest town. The surgeon is the drug store clerk and the aid to the injured is the application of peroxide over the counter. A coach is sometimes provided to carry wounded officers. An indicated recently during the retreat of Villa from Columbus, the wounded are usually abandoned.

One feature of the Mexican army is so incomparably simple that American troops cannot compete with it. This is the commissary department. The rough roads and deep dust of cross-country make travel for the immense supply trucks of General Pershing's army almost impossible. The railroads—even those attainable—are in dilapidated condition. Weak, unstable roadbeds, spreading rails, threatening every rod of travel, leaky engines and lack of coal make the work of transporting supplies nothing less than hazardous.

The Mexican soldiers have none of these difficulties. They need no trucks or trains to carry their food. Two days' rations in individual burlap bags suffice the peon soldier until he reaches the next village. But the greater part of the supplies are carried by the *soldaderas*—the actual commissary department. The squaw carries her master's burden. To one *soldadera* is entrusted the burden of chickens, tortillas, frijoles, with fiery chili and peppers plus a kitchenette; Mexican pottery of many varieties and a brazier. If unsatisfied with the size of this burden she adds to it a papoose and her shoes which she economically saves for town wear. These women are the camp followers as long as they can continue the pace. When left behind they wander about until they find another army—little matter which cause is espoused. The pay they receive from the soldiers is their only means of support. At night they sleep on the ground—on dirt or pavement—wrapped in blankets. They are loyal to the army they happen to be following.

Some of the *soldaderas* dress as men, putting aside cooking utensils for a gun. In the front rank, mounted and spurred, a woman can show herself to be as brave, as daring, as impervious to the fear of death—as profane—as the veriest bandit.

Boys fill the ranks. At least one-third of any Mexican army is composed of youths from the age of twelve to eighteen years. Ability to get into a saddle is sufficient qualification. After a battle in Fresnillo my attention was called to an eighteen-year-old Federal sympathizer. With raised rifle he was cursing viciously. He was about to bring the butt of his gun down on the head of another boy, two years younger, a Natera follower. The Natera soldier, wounded in the leg, was unable to move. Exhausted, he was stretched out near a cactus bush. I intervened and leaned over the small rebel. His first words were:

A MEXICAN SOLDIER MAY BE ALL OF TWELVE YEARS OLD.

"Señor, favor un cigarro?—Have you a cigarette to spare, sir?" He was grateful for a light. I hurried back to the hotel for help. While there I heard the report of rifles. The little rebel soldier had been shot by Federals. Our company employed sixteen boys for odd jobs. When the town of Fresnillo was captured all of these boys—not over fifteen years of age—eagerly joined the ranks of the conquering army.

Twenty-five of the Federals killed before they woke in the morning—they were drunk the night before—were boys. These had been assigned to duty in the *mason*—the barracks—and had slept piled together in small rooms surrounding the central patio. I saw one room after the slaughter. The adobe walls enclosed a room eight feet square. Curled up in knots were seven pitiful bundles of rags. Some lay on the red dirt of the floor; some on

bits of straw. I saw heads protruding from the bundles; a surprised look on the face, eyes half closed in sleep; the ragged, bloody hole of a soft-nosed bullet.

#### VILLA HAS HIS OWN METHOD OF REPRIMANDING.

Little can be said in favor of the discipline of the soldiers. The great Villa's brutality is well known. Once, after a town had fallen into his hands, he was leaving headquarters when he noticed that one of his privates was drunk.

"Compadre," he shouted to a lieutenant, "beat that drunken dog! No, harder, harder!" But the lieutenant was too gentle. Villa drew his own sword and with the flat of it beat the wretch across the head and shoulders till he fell unconscious.

"If I see you drunk again I'll kill you!" he said.

Fearless in battle, these soldiers are terrified in the face of this frightful punishment. At Zacatecas a soldier fled into the patio of my hotel. At his heels were his torturers. He reached the second balcony. He stood trembling, looking from right to left. Into the balcony at opposite ends came two knots of soldiers, his former *compadres*. Between them were stairs. Back he plunged into the patio, where another band awaited him. He screamed in terror and fell to his knees. They showed no mercy.

To beat an already spiritless peon is hardly conducive to right conduct, right thinking and loyalty. There can be no feeling of brotherhood, no unity in an army thus disciplined.

Our mine outside of Fresnillo commanded a view of the military operations which took place during my stay. I had a chance to judge the efficiency of the two armies. Madiana Barron was in charge of the defensive. He had recently recovered Fresnillo from General Natera. Natera was anxious to drive out Barron for the second time. Natera worked at night and slept by day. Barron preferred the light of day. Every night Natera destroyed the

fruits of Barron's daily labors. Every day Barron repaired the wreckage of Natera's nightly destruction. The railroad—the main issue—underwent many reverses during the three months' struggle.

Thus the night:

Across the starlit plain moves the dimly outlined spectacle of Natera's cavalry. Comes the crack of rifles. The cavalry scatters. Part gallops up a side hill. They reconnoiter. They spread along the railroad. A fire glistens. A second fire, beyond, lights up—another and another. The scene becomes more vivid. The men are dismounted. They pour petroleum on the fires. The rails are heated and bent. A larger fire lights up the horizon. The bridge is wrecked. Early morning sees the cavalry reunite. Back they ride across the plain. They are satisfied with their night's work.

The day:

Two trains wind out of the valley of Fresnillo. One, in advance, is filled with soldiers; the second, with the repair gang.

In advance of the first train, mounted on a flat car, is El Nina. El Nina—"The Baby"—is the large cannon. The first three cars behind the engine are loaded with officers—a surplus of generals, majors and colonels. With them is a vast number of *senoritas*—the *soldaderas*. In the open cars and on the roofs of the box cars in the rear are the peon soldiers—and their *senoritas*.

Long beams, rails, ties, anvils, crowbars, ropes are piled in the cars of the repair train. Peon soldiers ride on top of the conglomeration and in other cars.

Both trains bristle with bayonets. The trains stop. Confusion reigns. Many ideas are involved; shouts and curses rend the air. The work of repair finally begins. Gangs are assigned to the roadbed ahead. One shift works while the other eats.

Standing in the centre of a group of peons a *soldadera* sells her wares. In her right hand is a basket filled with *tortillas*, *frijoles*, *peppers* and *tamales*. Slung over her shoulder, partially concealed by her *rebozo*, are two chickens. From her left hand swings a brazier—her kitchen. The head of an Indian child peers over her shoulder—*quiere sabe, el padre*. Peons are taking victuals out of her basket and tossing them into broad-brimmed, steep-peaked straw sombreros. The peons are blanketed in gorgeous *sarapes*. Some one is telling a story. Roars of laughter go up.

In the blazing sun rows of *soldaderas* prepare *tortillas*. A long plank forms an aisle between the lines of squatting squaws. Bronze arms, smeared with white dough, stretching over the board, roll and slap the *tortilla* cakes into shape. Dirty blouses partly cover their breasts; *rebozos*, covering their heads, are slung over their backs; two long black braids fall below the *rebozos*. Here and there a black foot—a foot now become a hoof from ceaseless walking—may be seen sticking out from beneath rumpled flannel skirts. The skirts are banded in yellow and red.

#### MEXICAN DANCE HALLS MAY HAVE UNBIDDEN GUESTS.

On the green banks of an *arroyo* little groups of other women scrub white clothes against boards and stones, while naked, bronze-skinned children play about. Blanketed soldiers, crisscrossed with cartridge belts, heavy rifles lying by their sides, sprawl in the shade of a mesquite thicket smoking and gorging. A few goats and a peaceful *burro* graze in a field.

Meanwhile the repair gang tirelessly labor on the track. Iron tools clang dolefully. Men heavily shove rails from the flat cars. Peons shamble by, carrying rails on their shoulders. Others carry ties. The clank of sledges on spike rattles intermittently. The gangs shift. Confusion follows. Gradually the work is resumed. Ten miles of railroad repaired in a day is fast work. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon the trains are again loaded with soldiers and *soldaderas*. The rickety engines snort and puff

importantly, and, nosing their way slowly over the rolling sandy plain, pull back into the valley of the town.

This method of procedure continued for the best part of three months. Every night General Natera returned to undo the work of the diligent Barron. Neither side saw the advantage of interfering with the other's labors.

For divergence Natera occasionally sent a squad of cavalry into the heart of the town to hold up a dance. The clatter of hoofs on the cobbles, the jingle of steel spurs and the shouts of officers would ring out in the night. With a yell the men would dismount and noisily clank into a dance hall. In immense sombreros, gorgeous *sarapes*, Spanish scarfs, tight leather breeches, stinking cowhide boots, the cavalymen would enter, rattling their spurs on the boards. A dash for guns thrown in the corner—hands up! The music—guitars, a harp, mandolins—would cease. What money there was would be taken. The robbers, too, would consume the drinks—cognac or beer or *pulque*. Then out into the night they would clatter; into the saddle and away. Five miles out of the town, behind a hill, the men would unsaddle and sleep through the rest of the night.

Be it said that Pasqual Orozco was a dangerous man. He had revolted against and dispersed the army of Diaz—Don Porfirio Diaz, the greatest ruler and soldier Mexico has ever produced; Diaz, The Absolute; Diaz, The Man With the Iron Hand. Reports of Pasqual Orozco's preparedness greeted me as I entered Mexico for the first time. I was on my way south from Eagle Pass, headed for Terreon. Turned loose along this route was Orozco. His army was newly equipped—in the pink of condition.

A year later I met General Pasqual Orozco. He with his army were leaving Fresnillo by rail. With a number of engineers from our camp I rode to the station. A quarter of a mile from the station we reined in our horses. A discord of Indian yells forewarned us. Before venturing further we wished to sense the form of our reception.

Directly ahead, in a dusty field, a vast circle of Mexican soldiers shouted at the top of their lungs. Above the din we heard:

"Ja esta listo! All's ready!"

"Muy valiente!"

"Bravo!"

#### DISTINGUISHED ONLOOKERS AT A COCKFIGHT.

We were reassured. There was no danger.

This was a cockfight. A cockfight in Mexico is absorbing. This cockfight was absorbing the attention of a great part of Orozco's army. The general himself was there. His staff of six generals were also absorbed. An engineer from among us knew the general and introduced us. Orozco was extremely polite. He made way for us in the front row and permitted us to watch the preliminaries. A peon was extracting the tail feathers from one of the cocks. This excites the cock. Another peon was chewing the feathers plucked from the opposing cock's head. This brings good luck. Knives had been tied to the spurs of each contestant, and "Ja esta listo!" We did not care to watch the entire fight. Pasqual Orozco led us to the station.

The train to transport the army was in readiness. Orozco led us first to a car containing the staff's *senoritas*.

We gazed long at the carload.

A yellow *rebozo* over the shoulders, a red sash about the waist, a skirt of blue, red stockings—thus the color scheme. Add to this a high peaked felt hat inlaid with silver and ornate with tassels; a bronze complexion, white teeth, black sparkling eyes, black tresses. Picture twenty *senoritas* of this description.

Thence the officers led us to a flat car containing Orozco's Packard automobile. Finally the cannon were exhibited. The army had in their possession six French guns. But the general was in no mood for cannon.

#### "JUSTICE" FROM THE INSIDE.

Continued from page three.

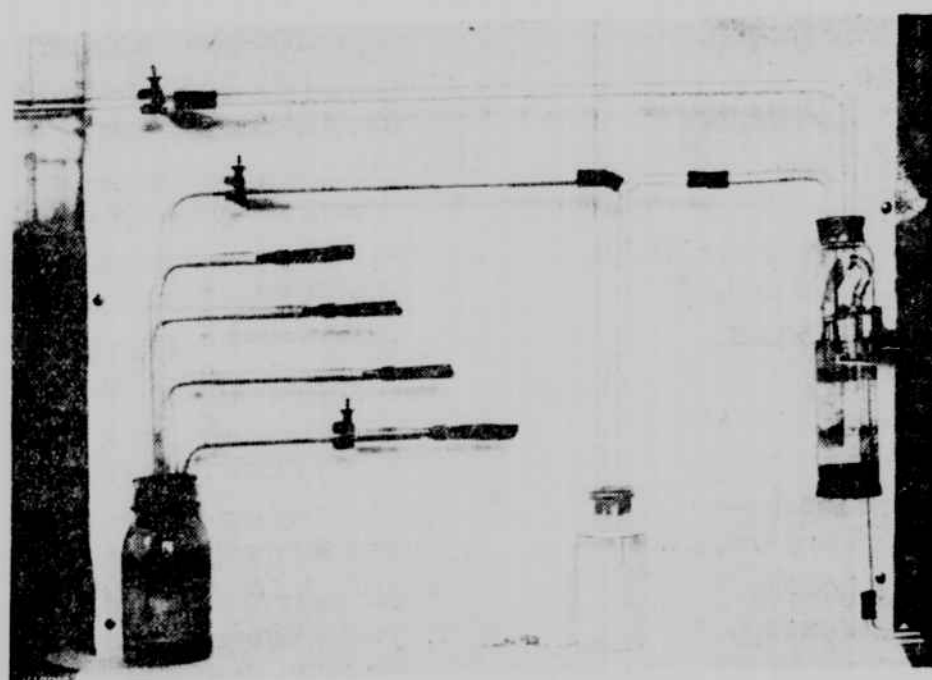
the shame and humiliation is more than the man can bear. (This all takes place in the play.)

Four weeks ago I was released from the Penitentiary. I secured a position with a large corporation as a salesman in a retail store (one of many). For two weeks everything went along nicely. I did my work faithfully and well. One day a customer came in. I waited on him. He proved to be a fellow who had served a term at the same time that I did. He seemed friendly to me: Glad to see that I was getting on well. The next day he came in again: this time he had another graduate of the Penitentiary with him who knew me. They waited outside the store, till I was through at 6 p. m. Then they proposed that I help them rob the store. I refused. The next day, while I was at lunch, my "friends" came in and told the manager and employes that I was an ex-convict and to be careful and watch me. Though the owner of the firm knew of my past trouble, the others in the store did not. Life there became unbearable. Slurs and disagreeable remarks were my lot, from day to day. At last I resigned my position. No one seems to care about giving me another chance. A few, among them the Judge who sentenced me, the National Prison Committee and a lady, Mrs. J. R. M., have been doing all they can for me, and are at present trying to secure employment for me.

It seemed uncanny to me, to sit in the audience watching the action of a play which every moment that passed made me feel as though I was going through my terrible experience once again.

Mr. Henry Stephenson and Charles Francis as the solicitors whose check was forged gave very excellent portrayals of the lawyers of a gone by day. Honest, strait-laced and without feeling except to see justice done, was their keynote. O. P. Haggie as the managing clerk drew what I believe the best work in the piece. His old-fashioned, kindly humor was excellent. A friend worth while having. John Barrymore's performance was extremely fine, and especially in the scene which shows him confined in his cell, his acting of a very emotional order shows exactly how a man feels when he has been shut up for days, weeks and months. Lester Loneragan as the prisoner's lawyer made an admirable address on behalf of the prisoner in the trial scene.

#### UNCLE SAM ACQUIRES THE SMOKING HABIT.



THE latest vice of Uncle Sam is the habitual use of tobacco. Here he is shown in the act of smoking four cigars at once. This machine is in the laboratory of the Bureau of Plant Industry, Department of Agriculture. A suction that smokes the cigars is created by the siphon at the left of the picture. Experts in tobacco culture note the way the cigars burn, and from this they advise the growers what chemical changes are needed in their fields to make better tobacco. Since the installation of this device many producers have come to rely on Uncle Sam for advice, and at almost any time of the day he can be found with four cigars in his mouth.

Photo by Harris & Ewing, Wash., from Paul Thompson, N. Y.